



Trail Class Matrix (FSH 2353, Section 14.2, Exhibit 01)

Trail Classes are general categories reflecting trail development scale, arranged along a continuum. The Trail Class identified for a National Forest System (NFS) trail prescribes its development scale, representing its intended design and management standards.¹ Local deviations from any Trail Class descriptor may be established based on trail-specific conditions, topography, or other factors, provided that the deviations do not undermine the general intent of the applicable Trail Class.

Identify the appropriate Trail Class for each National Forest System trail or trail segment based on the management intent in the applicable land management plan, travel management direction, trail-specific decisions, and other related direction. Apply the Trail Class that most closely matches the management intent for the trail or trail segment, which may or may not reflect the current condition of the trail.

Trail Attributes	Trail Class 1 Minimally Developed	Trail Class 2 Moderately Developed	Trail Class 3 Developed	Trail Class 4 Highly Developed	Trail Class 5 Fully Developed
Tread & Traffic Flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tread intermittent and often indistinctMay require route findingSingle lane with no allowances constructed for passingPredominantly native materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tread continuous and discernible, but narrow and roughSingle lane with minor allowances constructed for passingTypically native materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tread continuous and obviousSingle lane, with allowances constructed for passing where required by traffic volumes in areas with no reasonable passing opportunities availableNative or imported materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tread wide and relatively smooth with few irregularitiesSingle lane, with allowances constructed for passing where required by traffic volumes in areas with no reasonable passing opportunities availableDouble lane where traffic volumes are high and passing is frequentNative or imported materialsMay be hardened	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tread wide, firm, stable, and generally uniformSingle lane, with frequent turnouts where traffic volumes are low to moderateDouble lane where traffic volumes are moderate to highCommonly hardened with asphalt or other imported material
Obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Obstacles common, naturally occurring, often substantial and intended to provide increased challengeNarrow passages; brush, steep grades, rocks and logs present	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Obstacles may be common, substantial, and intended to provide increased challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Blockages cleared to define route and protect resourcesVegetation may encroach into trailway	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Obstacles may be common, but not substantial or intended to provide challengeVegetation cleared outside of trailway	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Obstacles infrequent and insubstantialVegetation cleared outside of trailway

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Constructed Features & Trail Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures minimal to non-existent Drainage typically accomplished without structures Natural fords Typically no bridges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures of limited size, scale, and quantity; typically constructed of native materials Structures adequate to protect trail infrastructure and resources Natural fords Bridges as needed for resource protection and appropriate access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures may be common and substantial; constructed of imported or native materials Natural or constructed fords Bridges as needed for resource protection and user convenience Bridges as needed for resource protection and appropriate access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures frequent and substantial; typically constructed of imported materials Constructed or natural fords Bridges as needed for resource protection and user convenience Trailsides amenities may be present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures frequent or continuous; typically constructed of imported materials May include bridges, boardwalks, curbs, handrails, trailside amenities, and similar features
Signs²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route identification signing limited to junctions Route markers present when trail location is not evident Regulatory and resource protection signing infrequent Destination signing typically infrequent outside of wilderness; generally not present in wilderness Destination signing, unless required, generally not present Information and interpretive signing not common 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route identification signing limited to junctions Route markers present when trail location is not evident Regulatory and resource protection signing infrequent Destination signing typically infrequent outside of wilderness; generally not present in wilderness Information and interpretive signing not common 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route identification signing at junctions and as needed for user reassurance Route markers as needed for user reassurance Regulatory and resource protection signing common Destination signing common outside of wilderness; generally not present in wilderness Information and interpretive signs may be common outside of wilderness Accessibility information likely displayed at trailhead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route identification signing at junctions and as needed for user reassurance Route markers as needed for user reassurance Regulatory and resource protection signing common Destination signing common outside of wilderness Information and interpretive signs may be common outside of wilderness Accessibility information likely displayed at trailhead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route identification signing at junctions and for user reassurance Route markers as needed for user reassurance Regulatory and resource protection signing common Destination signing common outside of wilderness Information and interpretive signs common Accessibility information likely displayed at trailhead
Typical Recreation Environ's & Experience³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural, unmodified ROS: Typically Primitive to Roaded Natural WROS: Typically Primitive to Semi-Primitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural, essentially unmodified ROS: Typically Primitive to Roaded Natural WROS: Typically Primitive to Semi-Primitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural, primarily unmodified ROS: Typically Primitive to Roaded Natural WROS: Typically Semi-Primitive to Transition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural, primarily unmodified ROS: Typically Primitive to Roaded Natural WROS: Typically Portal or Transition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be modified ROS: Typically Semi-Primitive to Rural WROS: Typically Portal or Transition

¹ For National Quality Standards for Trails, Potential Appropriateness of Trail Classes for Managed Uses, Design Parameters, and other related guidance, refer to FSH 2353, FSH 2309.18, and other applicable agency references.

² For standards and guidelines for the use of signs and posters along trails, refer to the Sign and Poster Guidelines for the Forest Service (EM-7100-15).

³ The Trail Class Matrix shows the combinations of Trail Class and Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) or Wilderness Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (WROS) settings that commonly occur, although trails in all Trail Classes may and do occur in all settings. For guidance on the application of the ROS and WROS, refer to FSH 2310 and 2353 and FSH 2309.18.